

DUNEDIN METHODIST PARISH

Finding Good in everyone Finding God in everyone

www.dunedinmethodist.org.nz



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PARISH BULLETIN

30th August 2020

WORSHIP FOR SUNDAY 6th September 2020

9.30am	Mornington	D Poultney
10.00am	Mosgiel	R Masterton
11.00am	Glenaven	R Mitchell
1.00pm	St Kilda	TBA

DATES TO REMEMBER

Tuesday 1 September @ 1.30pm – Mosgiel Methodist Womens Fellowship
 Sunday 6 September – Deadline for Mosgiel AGM Reports

MOSGIEL METHODIST WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP - Tuesday 1st September at 1.30 pm. Our speaker will be Doug Third, a paramedic with the rescue helicopters. As this is part of our Special Project, all are welcome.

MOSGIEL METHODIST CHURCH AGM.- Can all those involved with our AGM please have your reports in by **6th September**. This is so we can get them printed and handed out the week before our AGM. Your cooperation would be very much appreciated. Thank you. Elaine.

CAN YOU HELP?

Her name is Dania Saadoni. A Palestinian Arab refugee born in Gaza, she was blinded by an Israeli tear gas canister exploded on her property. Now a young woman in her 20s, she has been offered a house in Dunedin, but urgently needs financial support to purchase household goods to equip it. If you are able to donate even a small amount that will help towards her independent living. Please contact Colin Gibson (453 6662, or colin.gibson22@icloud.com).



Springing Forward

After a long winter filled with worrying or sad news about the latest Covid 19 statistics, uncertainty about the economy and forthcoming elections both at home and the USA, we've finally arrived at the beginning of Spring. This is the time when I always love to hear those few verses from the Song of Solomon that begin: *"Look, he comes leaping upon the mountains..."* 2:8

When we lived in Christchurch I always looked out for new-born lambs when we made journeys into the countryside, although I preferred not to think about their probable destination.

Depending on our viewpoints we might think: *'how cute'!* or, if you have a farming connection, *'that's a hopeful sign of good lambing percentages'*, or even *'Yum, 'roast lamb for Christmas dinner this year'!* But what I loved most was watching lambs frolicking, and leaping around in play.

'Leap' is such a wonderful word!

When it occurs in the Bible it's usually very joyful. Here are just a few examples that come to mind: King David leapt and danced when he led the Ark of the Covenant into Jerusalem (*2 Samuel 6:16*), and Elizabeth's baby,

John, leapt in the womb when Jesus' mother Mary brought her the news of her own pregnancy. (*Luke 1:41-44*) Later, in Acts (3:8) we read how a crippled man leaps to his feet after being healed.

I expect most of us love hearing, or singing Charles Wesley's famous hymn: *'O for a thousand tongues to sing!' In my years as a Methodist minister I always loved being at Conferences and other gatherings where hundreds of people would sing out at the tops of their voices: Hear him, ye deaf; his praise ye dumb, your loosened tongues employ; ye blind, behold your Saviour come; and leap ye lame for joy'*

'Leap, ye lame for joy'!

I've never been a great 'leaper' – hurdling was the absolute worst of my non-existent athletic skills at school, and since I've now had 2 hip replacements leaping is definitely out of the question!

I suspect none of us here, even those who were good at it in the past, would be leaping around much these days – repairs to knees and hips, and arthritic joints have put paid to that.

These days we more often think of leaping metaphorically. Even John who has, in the past, apparently effortlessly bounded up the stairs, is finding that more difficult since his recent back injury, although he assures me he can leap again!

But we can still experience joy in other ways.

Over 200 years ago, in 1802 William Wordsworth wrote:

*"My heart leaps up when I behold a rainbow in the sky:
So was it when my life began; So is it now I am a man;
So be it when I shall grow old, Or let me die!"*

It was, of course, Wordsworth who also wrote those famous lines:

*'I wandered lonely as a cloud
That floats on high o'er vales and hills,
When all at once I saw a crowd,
A host, of golden daffodils;
Beside the lake, beneath the trees,
Fluttering and dancing in the breeze.
Continuous as the stars that shine
And twinkle on the milkyway,*

*They stretched in never-ending line
 Along the margin of a bay:
 Ten thousand saw I at a glance,
 Tossing their heads in sprightly dance.”*

Leaping – springing – the two words have much the same meaning. The very name of the season comes from that experience of leaping forward into new life, new growth, and new beginnings.

We also talk of *‘leaping into the unknown’* or *‘taking a leap of faith’* with its added sense of adventure and daring. I’m sure most of us have related to these kinds of leaping at some stages of our lives.

In the creation stories in Genesis we read how God brought forth everything out of nothing; out of the dark void. where there had been darkness, suddenly there leapt forth light. The greatest question that many people today, including scientists, struggle to answer is – ‘how can something come out of nothing?’ Now, with previously unimaginable leaps forward in scientific discovery, we must accept that cloning and genetic modification are here to stay. But only God can bring new life into being.

Surely God has taken a leap of faith with us by giving us free will – the power to make decisions for ourselves. Our challenge is to live up to that faith God has in us. However, we do not work alone. We are in partnership with each other and with God, as Paul said to the Corinthians: *‘The one who sows and the one who waters really do not matter. It is God who matters because God makes the plants grow. We are partners working together and you are God’s field.’*(1Corinthians 3:6)

God makes the plants grow – how comforting that is! Gifts like kindness; encouragement; friendship; good listening and positive support are still able to grow in us all the time.

Wintertime can certainly make life feel more of a struggle, and it’s harder to find our enthusiasm, our creativity, the energy it takes to dance forward into a new season, not just on the calendar but in our lives. But, may the leaping we do this Spring be the leap of praise in our hearts, as we say thanks to our creator God for our beautiful world; for blossom and bulbs and birds; for our lives; the joys that we experience day by day and for the glory of another Spring.

Marcia Hardy